

(Washington, D.C.) – U.S. Representative Chet Edwards honored the life and brave service of Colonel Robert Howard, a highly decorated American hero, who was laid to rest with full military honors Monday at Arlington National Cemetery.

Colonel Howard served five tours of duty in Vietnam and is the only soldier in our nation's history to be nominated for the Medal of Honor three times for three separate episodes although it can be awarded only once. He was wounded 14 times in 5 tours of duty in Vietnam and was awarded eight Purple Hearts.

During Vietnam, he served in the Army Special Forces (Green Berets) and spent most of his five tours in the top-secret special operations forces. His amazing sacrifice for country is recounted in *SOG: The Secret Wars of America's Commandos in Vietnam* written by John Plaster.

Colonel Howard enlisted in the Army in 1956 at the age of 17, and retired after spending over thirty-six years in military service to the nation. He served with the 82nd Airborne Division; 101st Airborne Division; 3rd, 5th, 6th, and 7th Special Forces (Airborne); Military Assistance Command-Vietnam, Studies and Observations Group; 2nd Ranger Battalion; 7th Corps; HQ, Fifth US Army; Combined Forces Command; United Nations Command and XVIII Airborne Corps.

Colonel Howard received the Medal of Honor on March 2, 1971, for conspicuous gallantry while on a mission to rescue a missing American Soldier in enemy controlled territory in the Republic of Vietnam. At that time, Colonel Howard was a Sergeant First Class. The citation credited him for his "complete devotion to the welfare of his men at the risk of his life." He received a direct appointment from Master Sergeant to First Lieutenant on December 5, 1969 as a result of his bravery.

Colonel Howard was nominated for the Medal of Honor twice more for separate actions, and was also awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, Silver Star, Bronze Star with Valor (3rd Oak Leaf Cluster), Purple Heart (7th Oak Leaf Cluster), and the Air Medal for Valor (3rd Oak Leaf Cluster).

Colonel Howard spent the remainder of his life working with and on behalf of veterans and active duty troops. In December of 2009, he passed away in Waco, Texas at the age of 70. He and his family deserve our nation's salute for a lifetime of selfless service.

*Edwards is Chairman of the House Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Subcommittee and Co-chair of the House Army Caucus.*